A juſt and Lawful

TRYAL

OF THE

Teachers and profeſſed *Miniſters*

Of this age and

GENERATION.

BY

A perfect proceeding againſt them.

And hereby they are righteouſly examined, & juſtly weighed, and truly meaſured, and condemned out of their own mouths, and judged by their own profeſſed Rule, *viz.* the Scriptures, and thereby are proved to diſagree, and be contrary to all the Miniſters of Chriſt in former ages; and to agree and concur with all the falſe Prophets and deceivers in their call, in their maintenance, and in their doctrines, and converſation, and practice.

And being brought to the Bar of Juſtice, theſe things are truly charged againſt them, and legally proved upon them, and their own profeſſed Rule (the Scripture) have judged them guilty.

Whereunto is added, A ſhort deſcription of the true Miſtry of Chriſt; and of his lawful and juſt maintenance, according to the Apoſtles examples, and now again juſtified by the people of God called *Quakers*, in *England*.

By a friend to England's *Common wealth, for whoſe ſake this is written and ſent abroad.* E. B.

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A just and lawfull

TRYAL.

THE time of tryal is come, wherein the Lord is trying the hearts of all men; and now it is manifest what lodgeth in the hearts of all man kinde, and by the fruit every tree shall be judged. The Lord hath beheld the wickedness of this generation, and it is very great, and comes not short, but rather abounds all other generations that have gone before: Wickednesse is grown high among Teachers and people, and the measure of iniquity is fulfilling daily. Come, let us reason together; What think you? was there ever such a generation of Teachers as this is? Have they any example that ever went before for their wickedness? to whom may they be compared? or with whom shall we parallel them? And because they say the Scripture is their Rule, therefore will we try them by it, and their own mouths shall condemn them; and such they shall be concluded to be, whose example they do follow, be it Ministers of Christ, or be it deceivers; unto the Apostles and Ministers of Christ they are compared, but are found quite contrary in many things, and their practise fitly sutes and agrees with all the false Prophets & deceivers: and thus I shall prove them according to Scripture, wherein these men that are Teachers do disagree to the Apostles and Ministers of Christ which he sent forth in former generations; and wherein they do agree with the deceivers, and Antichrists and false Prophets, that have run, and not been sent.

1. And first of all, the Apostles and Ministers of Christ were made Ministers of Christ by the *gift of the Holy Ghost, and by power from on high onely*; and what they ministred unto others, *they had freely received from Christ, and had handled, felt, and tasted of the word of life*: But the Teachers of this generation doth not agree with them in this, for they are made Ministers by natural learning and education, and the knowledge of Arts, and by the ordination of men, and by powers of this world; (and not by the gift of the Holy Ghost) and they spake that which they have heard out of books, and studyed for by Arts, and which they have received from man, and not that which they have received only from the Lord. Act. 1.8 4. 31. Mar. 10.8. 1 Joh. 1. 1.

2. The Ministers of Christ they *were approved of God, and called by his spirit into the work of the Ministery, and were not of man, neither by man*. But many of these are approved of man, and not of God, and called by man, Gal. 1. 1

and maintained by man in their Miniſtry; and herein they do differ and diſagree; for (as I ſaid) the Miniſters of Chriſt were made Miniſters *by the Holy Ghoſt*, and not by natural learning, but theſe are made Miniſters by natural learning, or otherwiſe, and not by the gift of the Holy Ghoſt.

Acts 16. 4, 7, 11, 12 Acts 17. 17. 1Cor. 4. 11

3. Again, herein do they do diſagree. The Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt *went up and down through the World, declaring the word of the Lord freely at any time, in the Market-places, and in the Synagogues, and in the Streets, and went from Country to Country, and were ſtrangers upon earth, not having any certain dwelling place, or any great Parſonages* But theſe ſettle themſelves in a certain place, for ſo much money by the year, and ſpend their time in eaſe and pleaſure, and luſt of the fleſh, ſelling to the people for money what they preach; and herein they diſagree; the Miniſters of Chriſt preached freely as they had *received freely*; but the Miniſters of this age ſells for money what they preach to the people: and thus they differ in their call to the Miniſtry, and in their practiſe in the Miniſtry, and in their maintenance alſo, as is made manifeſt to many.

1 Joh. 1. 3.

4. Again, the Miniſters of Chriſt preached to bring people *into fellowſhip with God* by preaching of the *Goſpel*, *through converting ſinners unto the knowledge of the truth*, and by no other way did they make Chriſtians, nor counted any ſo but ſuch as had repented and were changed by the ſpirit. But the Teachers of this age doth make Chriſtians, by ſprinkling them while they are Infants, before they preach the Goſpel to them, or before they repent of their ſins; and they bring them into fellowſhip, by traditions and a vain ſhew of baptiſm, and not by the ſpirit of God; and herein alſo they diſagree, the one counted none Chriſtians but ſuch as were converted by the ſpirit of God, and knew the operation of Gods ſpirit; and the other counts all Chriſtians that are ſprinkled when they are Infants, while they are without the operation of the ſpirit of God, and converts them not unto God by their preaching, but tells them they are Chriſtians before they preach to them.

John 1. 9. Acts 26. 18.

5. Again, they differ in Doctrine; for the Miniſters of Chriſt preached *Chriſt the light of the World, and ſaid, he lighted every man that cometh into the World*: But the Teachers of this age contend againſt that, and ſaith every man is not enlightned by him, but ſome have no light from Chriſt: and the Miniſters of Chriſt *they turned people to the light, from the darkneſſe, and from Satans power to the Power of God.* But the Teachers of this age doth not turn people to the light of Chriſt within, but to the Saints words without, or to ſome other thing, and are divided among themſelves, and ſo in effect cryes, Lo here, and lo there is Chriſt in this form, or that form; but the Miniſters of Chriſt ſaid, *he was within people, or elſe they were Reprobates.*

2 Cor. 13. 5.

Rev. 19. 13. Luke 1. 1.

6. Again, the Miniſters of Chriſt ſaid, *Chriſt was the word*, and the Scriptures *was a Declaration of what they believed.* But the Teachers of this age ſaith, the Letter and the Scripture is the Word, and ſaith *it is the Inſtrument whereby God ſaves ſouls*, & ſaith *it is both the writings and the things ſignified*; and ſaith *it is the foundation of foundations*, but thus the Miniſters of Chriſt

Christ never ſpoke of the Letter: and thus herein they differ and diſagree, the one preacheth *Chriſt to be the Word*, the other preacheth the Letter and the Scripture to be the Word: The Miniſters of Chriſt ſaid, *Chriſt was the Foundation*; but theſe ſay the Scripture is the foundation, and herein they are contrary, and ſheweth by their Doctrine another ſpirit then was in the Apoſtles. Eph. 2. 20.

7. Again, the Miniſters of Chriſt ſaid, *they ſpoke wiſdome among them that were perfect*; and ſaid, *As many of us as are perfect be thus minded*; and ſaid, *that the end* of their Miniſtery *was to preſent every man perfect in Chriſt*. But the Teachers of this age denies perfection, and ſay, None muſt be perfect in this life; and if any preach up perfection that it is to be attained, they ſay it is Error, and damnable Doctrine: Nay, they ſay none ſhall ever be free from ſin, or ever have victory over their ſin, nor overcome the body of ſin while he be upon Earth: But the Miniſters of Chriſt witneſſed they were *more than Conquerors*, and that they had put off the body of death, *and were free from ſin, and were the Servants of Righteouſneſſe*: And herein alſo they differ, and are not of one ſpirit; and we know that the Miniſters of Chriſt were guided by the ſpirit of God, which held forth theſe Doctrines; and we know the Teachers of this age, that their ſpirit muſt needs be of the devil, becauſe it holds forth and practiſeth what the Miniſters of Chriſt did not, but the contrary. 1 Cor. 2. 6. Phil. 3. Col. 1. 28 Rom. 8. 37. Rom. 6. 2.

8. Again, the Miniſters of Chriſt were *perſecuted* and *ſuffered cruel and grievous things for righteouſneſſe ſake*, as you may read in the *Acts*, and *did not render evil for evil to any man, for they ſuffered patiently*. But the Teachers of this age are not perſecuted, but are Perſecutors, and cauſeth men to be put into priſon, and to be baniſhed out of Towns; and ſues people at the Law, and ſeeks occaſions againſt the people of God; and herein they diſagree, and are not of the ſame ſpirit as they were which were Miniſters of Chriſt, but ſheweth a ſpirit contrary. 1 Theſſ. 5. 15.

9. Again, the Miniſters and Apoſtles of Chriſt *were not chargeable to any, but made the Goſpel without charge, and free, and laboured with their own hands*, and did not live idely, but *were often in cold, hunger, and nakedneſs, and perils, and tryals*: but the Teachers of this age live in pride, and covetouſneſſe, and fulneſs, and doth not work with their own hands, but makes the Goſpel of Chriſt chargeable, for many hundred thouſand pounds in a year doth but maintain them, which they have out of poor mens labors; and ſo theſe differ and diſagree from the Miniſters of Chriſt, and ſhews they are not of that ſpirit that they were guided by, but are guided by a contrary ſpirit, becauſe they are contrary in their call, and in their doctrine, and practiſe, and maintenance. 2 Theſſ. 3. 8. 1 Cor. 11. 26. 22.

10. Again, the Miniſters of Chriſt preached by the ſpirit, *according as the ſpirit gave them utterance, and ſometime continued preaching till midnight*: But the Teachers of this age are limited by a glaſſe, and preacheth by a glaſs, and when the hour is out, their time of preaching is ended; and that which they have ſtudyed for before-hand, that they preach, and not that which they have received immediately from the ſpirit of God: And herein Acts 2. 4. Acts 20. 7.

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in do they disagree, and in many things more, which after may be declared.

1 Cor. 14. 31. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 1 Acts 21. 9. Ier. 23. 28.

11. Again, the Ministers of Christ said, *Ye may all prophesie one by one, that all might be edified; and as every one had received the gift of Christ, so they might minister to others, and desired that all the Lords people were Prophets, and Sons and Daughters did prophesie*: But the teachers of this age will not suffer all to prophesie one by one, neither will allow any to preach as they have received from Christ, without such qualifications, and learned Arts, and ordinations of men; and they will not allow a woman to prophesie or speak among them, and *all might speak the word of the Lord faithfully that had it, and all might minister as they had received it*; this was order in the Apostles daies among them; but this is now counted confusion by the Teachers of this age; and if any speak to them, or any among them, many such are made to suffer cruelty, or imprisonment, or such like, by their means; and herein they disagree, and shew that they are guided by another spirit than the Ministers of Christ were guided by, and so are not his Ministers, but Deceivers.

1 Joh. 1. 1. 2 Cor. 10. 16. 2 Cor. 4. 2.

12. Again, the Ministers of Christ declared what they had *heard, and seen, and felt, and tasted of the word of life; and none of them did boast in another mans line*, but what they all had received of the Lord, that they declared, and not their own inventions, and *commended themselves to every mans Conscience in the sight of God*; and they did not provide themselves Studies full of Books to gather out of in a weeks time what to preach on the first dayes, as the Teachers of this age do, who by vain study, and humane learning, frames up, and notes it in a Book, an hour, or two hours discourse to the people: And herein they disagree, and shews that they are guided by a spirit contrary to the Ministers of Christ.

Mat. 4. 19, 20, 21. Mat. 9. 9. 2 Cor. 11. 14.

13. Again, the Apostles and Ministers of Christ were called from *their Herds, and from Nets; from their receit of Custom; and from their Callings; and by receiving the Holy Ghost were made Ministers of Christ, and did not seek peoples mony to themselves, but sought the people to God, and went through cruel sufferings and persecutions many times, that they might hold forth the way of life and truth to all people*: But the Teachers of this age, they are trained up from their child-hood in Arts and Sciences, rising by degrees from one vanity to another, till at last they arrive to the function of a Minister of Christ, as they call it, and few or none of them hath been called from their ordinary calling to preach the Gospel, for such a one is hardly allowed of to preach among people; and they seek peoples mony to themselves, and not the people to God: And herein they disagree, and shews another spirit then was in the Apostles.

Rom. 8. 14. 1 Joh. 2. 27.

14. Again, the Ministers of Christ *were led and guided by the spirit of Christ*, and did not fulfill their own wills, nor the wills of men; and they brought people *to the feeling of the spirit of Christ in them, to teach them*, and after they had begotten people to God, *they said they needed no man to teach them, but as the anointing within them taught them*. But the teachers of this age follows their own spirits, and are subject to the wills of men;

men; if men admits them to teach, they do; but if men deny them, then they do not preach; but the Apoſtles did not thus, for when men *forbid them to teach, they did not ceaſe to preach, but went on boldly, declaring the Name of the Lord:* And theſe teachers doth not bring people to know the ſpirit of Chriſt in them, neither can any through their preaching receive the anointing to dwell in them, that ſo they do not need any man to teach them; but people are ever learning as long as they live, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth, and people are not profited at all; and in this thing they diſagree, and ſhews another ſpirit then the Apoſtles were guided by, even the ſpirit of Antichriſt. Acts 4. 17, 18, 19.

15. Again, the Miniſters of Chriſt *were low, poor, meek, ſober, humble men*, ſuch as did not exalt themſelves, nor maintain themſelves in pride and fulneſs, by receiving of poor peoples labours. But the Teachers of this age are proud, and heady, high-minded, ſelf-willed, and exalted ſpirits, living in idleneſs, pride, and fulneſs, and receives of the labours of poor people; and herein they diſagree; for the Apoſtles were often *in cold, and hunger, and great ſufferings and perplexities*; but theſe are as fed horſes, the proudeſt of all people, and the moſt covetous of any men, and all men muſt bow to them, and call them Maſters, which is quite contrary to Chriſts command. And thus they ſhew another ſpirit then what the Miniſters of Chriſt were guided by; and if another ſpirit, it muſt needs be the ſpirit of the devil; for either the ſpirit of Chriſt leads men, or the ſpirit of the devil. Heb. 11. 37, 38.

And now ſeeing that the Teachers of this age brings forth fruits contrary to the Miniſters of Chriſt, it ſhews that they are not guided by the ſpirit of Chriſt, becauſe in their calling, in their Miniſtery, in their maintenance, in their life and converſation, and in their doctrine they are not the ſame, but quite contrary to the Apoſtles and Miniſters of Chriſt; what can we conclude of them? we have concluded already that ſuch are deceivers, whoſe works are of another nature, and who are guided by another ſpirit than the Miniſters of Chriſt were, for Chriſt ſaith, *Every tree is known by its fruits*; And this is ſufficient what I have ſaid, and if need require, it may further be made to appear in the ſight of the whole world, and ſufficiently proved, that they differ in all theſe things mentioned, and in many more, and are not one with the Apoſtles, neither in call, nor practice, nor maintenance, nor in doctrine, nor in converſation, nor in any other thing, but doth diſagree, and is quite contrary; ſo as it is concluded theſe are not the Miniſters of Chriſt, though they profeſs themſelves to be ſo, becauſe they bring forth fruits quite contrary to the ſpirit of Jeſus, which the ſpirit of Jeſus did and doth reprove: and ſeeing they are not guided by the ſpirit of JESUS, becauſe their fruits are contrary to it, then muſt they needs be guided by the ſpirit of Antichriſt, and ſo are the Miniſters of Antichriſt, and doth his works by his ſpirit; and further, I ſhall ſhew wherein they do agree with the falſe Prophets and falſe Apoſtles, and wherein they are like unto them in their Miniſtry and practiſe, and doctrine, and converſation; and if the marks of deceivers fall upon them in the ſight of all people, why ſhould they

not

not bear it? And if the ſame works be proved to be acted by them, which the falſe Prophets and deceivers acted, then why ſhould it be thought a thing incredible among men that theſe are deceivers?

1. Firſt, the falſe Prophets *run and were not ſent; and they did not profit the people at all, for they ſtood not in the counſel of God, and ſo they turned not any from their iniquity, but rather ſtrengthened the hands of the evil-doer, ſo that none could turn from their wickedneſs; and they ſpoke a viſion of their own heart, and not from the mouth of the Lord; and they ſaid ſtill to the wicked, The Lord hath ſaid, ye ſhall have peace; and to every one that walked after the imaginations of their own heart, they cryed, No evil ſhall come upon him, and the Prieſts and the Prophets were prophane,* as you may read *Jer.* 23. And this is a fit parallel for the Teachers of this generation, they can ſhew no call from God, nor by his ſpirit, neither is people profited by them, as experience doth ſhew and teach through this Nation; & they do cry peace to the wicked, and count all Chriſtians and Followers of Chriſt that are but ſprinkled when they are Infants, though they live in wickedneſs; and from them, as from the Prophets of Iſrael, is prophaneſs gone forth into many Nations, and a wicked example of evil theſe give to all Nations, neither do theſe ſpeak from the mouth of the Lord, but a viſion of their own heart, and what old Authors ſay, and at the beſt but what the Saints of the Lord ſaid before them, and this is no more, as done by them, then ſtealing the Prophets words, or the word from their neighbour; Again, you may read how the falſe Prophets *uſed their tongues, and ſaid, the Lord ſaith it, when God had never ſpoken to them, but onely what they had ſtole from others*, who were the Prophets of the Lord; and this is a fit example to the Teachers of this age, and a true parallel between them; for theſe dare not own that ever they heard the voyce of the Lord immediately, nor that they ſpoke from the mouth of the Lord immediately, but uſeth their tongues, and ſaith the Lord ſaid ſo by ſuch a Propher, when as themſelves have not received the word from the Lord, and the Lord was againſt ſuch who propheſied lies, as did the falſe Prophets of Iſrael, as the Teachers of this age do, as it is manifeſt, and the Lord is againſt them; and herein do they agree, and concur with the falſe Prophets in their call, and are in concord with the deceivers of old.

Jer. 23. *chap.*

2. Again, the falſe Prophets, and blind watchmen of Iſrael, *they were ignorant, and they were greedy dum doggs that never could have enough, and they look to their own way, and every one ſought for his gain from their quarters, and they were drinkers of wine, and ſtrong drink, and boaſted that to morrow ſhould be as this day, Iſay* 56. And this is a fit parallel with the Teachers of this age, for they are blind watchmen, and doth not diſcover to people the wickedneſs of their waies, and no leſs can be ſaid of them, than that they are greedy dumb dogs, for they all look to their own way, and every one of them hath a quarter (a Town or a Pariſh) from which they ſeek their gain, and ſome of them are lovers of wine, and ſtrong drink, as daily experiences witneſs; and herein the Teachers of this generation are proved to ſucceed the falſe Prophets in the ſame works, and ſheweth they are guided

led by the same spirit, because they so fitly agree and concur in their works, and this is plain to all men that are but reasonable, much more to men that are spiritual.

3 Again the deceivers such as were false prophets, *Preached for hire, and Divined for money, and yet leaned upon the Lord, and said, is not the Lord among us?* and the teachers of this age they have hire for preaching, and great sumes of money, and they say they lean upon the Lord; of these things there needs no proof, they are so plain, in every Towne, and Countrie where the Priests preacheth for hire, and the Prophets divine for money; and herein they fitlie agree, and concur with the deceivers of old, and followes them as an example, shewing that they walke by the very same spirit. Mic. 3. Chap.

4 Again the false shepherds of *Israel were like foxes in the deserts, for they followed their own spirits, and had seen nothing but lying Divinations, saying the Lord said, when the Lord had not sent them; and they seduced the people, saying peace, when there was no peace to them from God, and one builded a wall, and another daubed it with untempred morter, and with lyes; the heart of the righteous they made sad,* whom the LORD had not made sad, *and strenthened the hands of the wicked that he should not returne from his wicked way, by promising him life*; And this is a fit paralel to the Teachers of this age, for they follow their own spirits, because they doe things contrary to the spirit of Jesus; and they have seen nothing but lying vanities, and divinations, whereby they do seduce the people, by telling them they are Christians, and that they are baptised into the faith of Christ, and that they have the Seale of the remission of sins, by being sprinkled with water when they were Infants; and these are lying divinations by which they seduce people, and saith they shall have peace while they still continue in sin; and thus they build a wall, and daubes it with untempered morter, and makes a Christian of their own, and feeds him with false hopes, and with such lies as these, and many other which they declare for doctrine; the heart of the righteous is made sad at this day, and the hands of the wicked are strengthned, that he cannot turne from his wicked way, for life is promised to him, though he be wicked, & ungodly, living in all unrighteousnesse, for they tell him that Christ is his righteousnesse to justifie him, & then he thinks he needs not turne from his sin, and so their hands are strengthned that they cannot turn from their sins; and herein the teachers of this age, and the false Prophets do fully agree, and are so like the one to the other, as children of one father, and their works are so like as craftsmen of one science; and thus they are one in union, and followes the same spirit. Ezek. 13.

5 Again the shepherds of *Israel*, idle pastors, and deceivers they *eat the fat, and they cloathe themselves with the wool, and they killed them that were fed, but they feed not the flock, the diseased they did not strengthen, neither healed they the sick, neither bound they up the broken, neither brought they again that which was driven away, neither did they seek again that which was lost, but with force, and cruelty, they ruled the flock, and was scattered, and become meate to all the beasts of the field, and the sheep wandred through out all the* Ezek. 34 Chap.

Mountains, and the flock was ſcattered, and none of the ſhepheards did ſearch or ſeek after them, and they eat and drank up the good of the Paſture, and trod down the reſidue with their feet; and they thruſt with ſide and with ſhoulder, and they puſhed all the diſeaſed with their horn, till they ſcattered them abroad; Now this is a fit compariſon with the practice of the teachers of this age; for they eat the fat, and lives in pleaſures, and fulneſs moſt of anie, and they cloath with the wool, for they claim the tenth part of everie mans wool; and if any be fed by the true ſhepheard, they ſeek to kill them, and to devour their lifes by cauſing them to be impriſoned, and cruelty done unto them; and they feed not the flock, neither do they ſtrengthen the diſeaſed, nor healeth the ſick, neither bind they up the broken; for if any be wounded and cryes out becauſe of the burden of ſinne, and be ſick, and broken, and trembles at the word of the Lord; ſuch they cry out is deceived and mocketh at them; and, the Image of God which hath been driven away and loſt, they have not ſought in people, but with cruelty have they ruled among people, by running to Magiſtrates, and cauſing ſuch to be put into priſon that would not help to maintain them, and thus with crueltie do they rule among people, as it is witneſſed by manie teſtimonies in *England*; and the people are ſcattered, and wandered into many ſects, and falſe judgements, and falſe opinions, and they are not ſought after by the Teachers of this age to regain them to the truth by ſound doctrine, but they perſecute them; and the ſhepherds feed themſelves, and feeds not the flock, and even eats up the good paſture, and treads down the reſidue; and drinks of the deep waters, and fouls the reſidue with their feet, ſo that none that follows them can drink of the pure waters, nor eat of the bread of life; and they thruſt with ſide, and with ſhoulder, and puſh all the diſeaſed which are wounded, becauſe of their ſin; who is ready to die for want of the Bread of life, which denies, and are weary of their abominations; theſe they puſh at with their horns, and cauſeth to be perſecuted; and thus they fitly agree with the falſe ſhepherds of *Iſrael*, and are no whit wanting in any thing wherein they were guiltie, but rather abounding; which ſheweth that they follow the ſame ſpirit, and are of the ſame ſtock, and ſeed, and the Lord is againſt theſe, as he was againſt them in old time, and no more are theſe Miniſters of Chriſt that acts theſe things, then they were which acted the ſame things by the ſame ſpirit; and this is plain to all that ſhuts not their eye, and ſtops not their ear.

6. Again, the falſe Prophets and deceivers, *they made the peop'e erre, and did bite with their teeth, and cryed peace, but they that put not into their mouths, they prepared War againſt them*, as you may read *Micha* 3. Now the teachers of this age brings forth the verie ſame; for they crie peace unto all that puts into their mouths, though people be never ſo ungodlie; if they will maintain them, they crie peace to them, but if people put not into their mouths, they prepare war againſt them, by ſuing them at the Law, and caſting them into priſon if any deny to pay them tithes, or mony, though they have no due to it by the Law of Chriſt; ſuch do prepare open war againſt

againſt them by diſtraining their goods, and taking treble dammages, and caſting their bodies into bonds; and herein the teachers of this age agrees with the falſe Prophets of *Iſrael*; can any man be ſo blind that doth not ſee it? doth any man ſtop their ear, ſo as that they cannot hear this to be true? they ſhew themſelves in all things to be one with the falſe Prophets of *Iſrael*, when juſtlie they are tryed by their own rule, as they ſay, and ſo let them bear this judgement, which their own profeſſed rule judgeth with.

7. Again the Prieſts, and falſe prophets of *Iſrael*, thus it is ſaid of them, *that as troops of Robbers waits for a man, ſo the companie of Prieſts murders in the way with conſent, for they commit lewdneſs*, *Hoſ.* 6. 9. and what leſs may be ſpoken of the teachers of this age, ſpiritual men ſhall judge; for if any man do but ceaſe from their abominable worſhip, their deceitfull worſhip and Idolatrie, and come to the knowledge of God, they even ſeek to murder in the way, & cryes out againſt them for being deluded, and deceived, & ſuch like; ſo that like as troops of Robbers wait for a man, ſo it may be ſaid of the teachers of this age; for they take away the key of knowledge, and will not enter in themſelves to the knowledge of the truth, nor ſuffer them that would; and indeed whatſoever abomination the Teachers and Prophets of *Iſrael* were found guiltie of, the Teachers of this age doth not come ſhort but rather abound (let ſearch be made through the Scriptures, & ſee whether there was anie evil committed by them) I mean the falſe Prophets of *Iſrael*; that is not committed by the Teachers of this age; what were they guiltie of, that theſe can free themſelves from? if anie man hath a word to ſay, let us hear it, and come out with your Arguments you wiſe men, and let us hear your plea; and they doing the ſame works which the falſe prophets of *Iſrael* did, muſt needs be concluded to be followers of the ſame ſpirit, and that they are no leſs than they were whoſe examples they follow, which are followers of the falſe Prophets, and not of the Miniſters of Chriſt.

8. Again Chriſt in his warning, *to beware of the leaven of the Phariſees, who gives the* deſcription what they were, and what their practices were, and he ſaith, they, (meaning the Phariſees) *did bind heavy burdens, grievous to be born, and they laid them on mens ſhoulders, but themſelves would not move them with one of their fingers; and their works they do to be ſeen of men, and loves the uppermoſt rooms at feaſts, and their chiefeſt ſeats in Synagogues, and greetings in the Markets, and to be called of men Maſters*: Now the Teachers of this generation are like unto theſe, they do ſucceed the Phariſees in bringing forth the ſame fruits; for do not theſe bind heavie burdens grievous to be born, and laying them on mens ſhoulders, making them ſuffer grievous things through their cruelty, as impriſonment, and ſpoyling their goods, theſe are grievous burdens which they lay upon men, but they will not touch them with one of their fingers; & their works are done to be ſeen of men, for they think to be heard for their much babling; and we know they love the uppermoſt rooms at feaſts, & hath it often. Matt. 23.

and the chief place of the Synagogue, they love that, and have it; and to be called of men master, which Christ forbids his Ministers to be, they love that, and they have it; and herein they do agree with the Pharisees, and in other things, if we should duelie examine the Scriptures, shewing that they are of the same spirit which the Pharisees were of which crucified Christ.

9 Again, the pharisees and deceivers were persecutors, *such as complained to the Magistrates*, as you may read through all the new Testament and the book of the *Acts*, and elsewhere; *How the Chief Priests caused the Saints to be persecuted by lying informations, and grievous complaints* Act. 24. 1, 2, 4, 6. *to the Elders and Rulers; they sought to take Christ by subtilty, and kill him, and they persecuted the Apostles to prison, and some to death, and others to bonds, and cruel sufferings.* And this was done chiefly by or through Mat. 26. 3. 4. the complaint of the Priests; *it was* Amaziah *the Kings Priest that complained to* Jeroboam, *and informed against the poor Prophet* Amos; *and it was* Shemshia *the Scribe that complained to the King against the building of the City of God*; And it was the Sonne of the Priest that persecuted *Jeremiah*; and herein also the teachers of this generation doth agree and concord with the Chief Priests, with, and in persecuting the innocent, shewing that they are of the same spirit; for now they complain and informe against the people of God, and through their information evil is done against them; and it is they through their lying and false accusation to the Magistrates by whom the Saints do suffer; and in all these things they do fullie agree, and concur with the deceivers of old. Amos 7. 10. Jer. 20. 19

10 Again, the false Apostles, they were such as went *for filthy lucre,* Tit. 1. 11. 2 Pet. 2. Chap. *and through covetousnes, with feigned words, made merchandize of souls, and denyed the Lord that bought them, and brought in damnable heresies, and they walked after the flesh, in the lusts and uncleanesse, and despised government, and were perjumptuous and self-willed, and sported themselves with their own deceivings, and they could not cease from sin, but beguiled unstable souls, and an heart they had exercised in covetous practices, and they went astray, loving the way of* Balaam, *loving the wages of unrighteousnesse; and they were wells without water, and were clouds that are carried with a Tempest; they spake great swelling words of vanity, and allured through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonnesse, those who were escaped from them, who lived in errour, and they promised others liberty, and themselves were the servants of corruption.* Now the Teachers of this age are found guiltie of, and in all these things they agree, which the false Apostles were guilty of; for they through covetousnesse with feigned words, do make merchandize of the people; if any will give them more money at the next Town, they will sell the people where they are, and go where there is more money; and seeing they are out of the doctrine of Christ, it is no lesse then denying the Lord that bought them.

And that they hold damnable errors, this I can prove; for * one of them

*At *Reading.*

them ſaid in my hearing, That the Scripture was the Foundation of Foundations. And * another ſaid, That the Scripture was both the writings and the thing ſignified; and theſe are as damnable errors as ever the falſe Apoſtles brought in: And theſe they walk after the luſt of the fleſh, in pride and ſulneſſe thereof, and deſpiſe the government of Chriſt, and are preſumptious, ſelfe-willed, lofty, high ſpirited men; and as the falſe Apoſtles did, ſo do theſe ſpeak evil of things they know not, of things they underſtand not; and no leſſe can be ſaid of theſe, but that they ſport themſelves with their own deceivings, and they cannot ceaſe from ſin themſelves; for it is a principal doctrine among them, That none muſt be free from ſin while they be upon Earth, and they deceive unſtable Souls, who thinks them to be Miniſters of Chriſt, when as they were never ſent of Chriſt, and it is evident that their hearts are exerciſed with covetous practices, who ſues poor people at Law, ſome for 12 pence, which they are more able to give to, then they whom they ſue to receive from; and they follow the error of *Balaam*, and run after him greedilie who went for gifts and rewards, as doth theſe, and hath unrighteous wages, cauſeth people to pay them monie, for whom they do not work, and this is unrighteous wages; theſe are wells without water, and clouds without rain: they make a ſhew of godlineſſe and righteouſneſſe, when as they are prophane and unrighteous: and they ſpeak great ſwelling words of vanitie, profeſſing themſelves to be Orthodox Divines, and ſuch like, which are no more but words of vanitie, without truth and they ſeek to allure all people to follow them in their way, of Idol-worſhips, and ſo they are deceived and deceiving: And while they promiſe libertie to others by Chriſt from ſin when they are dead, themſelves are the ſervants of corruption, and live in ſin to this day, and in all things which the falſe Apoſtles were guiltie of, theſe comes not behind, but theſe doth ſhew by their works, that they are guided by the ſame ſpirit which was in the deceivers of old, and ſo they agree and concur one with another in unrighteouſneſſe.

* At *Ware*.

Again, the falſe Prophets and deceivers, which were come and coming in the daies of *Iohn*, *they were of the world, and they ſpake of the world, and the world heard them*: and they were them which Chriſt propheſied of ſhould come into the world, which ſhould *deceive many*, and ſuch were they which the Apoſtle ſaw coming in, 2 *Tim.* 3. and he ſaid, after his dayes *grievous Wolves ſhould come in, which ſhould not ſpare the flock, ſuch which were departed from the faith, and ſpake lyes in hypocricy, having their conſciences ſeared with a hot iron; and ſuch were they, covetous, boaſters, proud, blaſphemers, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, falſe accuſers, incontinent, fierce, diſpiſers of thoſe things which were good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleaſures more then lovers of God: They have the forme of godlineſſe but deny the power thereof: and yet all by them were ever learning, but never able to come to the Knowledge of the Truth*: Of this ſort the Apoſtle

1 Joh. 4. 5. Mat. 24. Acts. 20. 29. 1 Tim. 4. 2 Tim. 3. 2: 3: 4: 5: 6: 7: 8.

saw was coming, and would come more fully, and such are the Teachers of this age; for they are of the world, living in pride and the wickedness of it; and the world hears them, such as themselves, proud and wicked people; for they that fears God, and walks in his wayes, are departed from many of them, and they shew that they have no faith, but are departed from it; for faith keeps from evil, from the wayes of sin and death, which they live in, and lies in; abundance they speak, and in hypocrisie; and their consciences are seared, that is plain, else they could not do as many of them doth, who causeth innocent people to be put in prison, and makes havock of their goods, who will not pay them Tithes, or maintain them; and they are the proudest of men, and as covetous as any, and unthankful and unholy they shew themselves to be; and they are false accusers and truce breakers, for they hardly make any conscience of belying the people of God in the pulpets, or to the Magistrates; and they are heady, and high-minded, and if some of them be not treacherous, judge ye, who hath turned diverse wayes in their judgements, according to the times; and they have a form of godlinesse, but not the power; prayes and sings in a form, and preacheth in a form and method, and people are ever learning by them, sixtie years, or more or lesse, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth, but dies in ignorance and blindenesse, without knowledge under them: And herein do they agree also with the false prophet and Antichrist which *John* saw to be come in, and such as the Apostle saw, which were then coming in; and they shew the very same spirit, by the same works, and the same fruits which appears from them, men of understanding may compare them, in all these things they do see, and appears to be of that very stock and generation which the Apostle propheſied of, for they were grievous wolves which should not spare the Flock, which the Apostle saw; and these do not spare the Flock, but even devours them, and no lesse then grievous wolves can they be said to be, for if a poor woman have but ten egges in all the world, they will have one, in many parts of this Nation, or but ten chickins, they will have one, or but a fire in their house, they will have a penny for the smoke, and such like wolvish destroying wayes; and if these be not grievous wolves, let all the world judge. And here is their treachery made manifest, while they say they preach the Gospel in love to souls, yet its manifest they preach for love of money, for few or none of them preaches where there is no money; and people are absolute blinde that do not see them, for in all things they agree with the deceivers and false prophets of old, and shews that they be of the very same spirit; and thus you see their own rule condemns them, and because they say the Scripture is their Rule, therefore I have thought good to lay them to it, and measure them by their own line, and all people may see wherin they are quite contrary to the Ministers of Christ, and wherein they wholly agree with the deceivers: Let them hide themselves from this blow if they can, and let them bring their arguments against this sentence, and let all their Friends appear for them, and see if they can reverse this judgement which their own line hath judged them

them by, let them bring in their plea and defend themſelves from this, if it be poſsible, for in thoſe things which I have named, and many other, it is manifeſt, that they fully agree with the Deceivers, and diſagree with the Miniſters of Chriſt, and by their fruits they are perfectly made manifeſt.

Again, Chriſt ſpake in his daies, and the Apoſtles in their daies, that falſe Prophets and deceivers ſhould come into the world, and after them, and they gave diſcriptions what ſuch they ſhould be, and what fruit they ſhould bring forth, as I have before mentioned in that 1 *Joh.* 2. and it is plain that theſe Deceivers and falſe Prophets did come in, according as was propheſied; for *John* ſaid, *By this we know it is the laſt times, for now are they come*, which was many hundred years ago: I ſay, the deceiver and falſe Prophets which Chriſt propheſied of to come, *Mat.* 24 came into the world many hundred years ago, as you may read 1 *Joh.* 2. And with this I ſhall conclude this particular, The teachers of this age by their fruits are proved already to be of that ſtock, and ſucceeders in the ſame works, by the ſame ſpirit of them which Chriſt ſaid ſhould come, and which the Apoſtle ſaw was then come, and ſo they did deceive many, as theſe do deceive many in the ſame way as them that went before them; And ſo let it not be a thing incredible to the people of theſe Nations, that many of theſe teachers, which are called Miniſters, are deceivers generally, but if there be any one that fears God among them, or loves truth and ſincerity, it will be made manifeſt, and ſuch I ſpare, and they ſhall be ſpared in the day of the Lord; But it I ſay, generally, and the main part of them, even they that bring forth theſe fruits before mentioned, which the falſe Prophets brought forth, are not the Miniſters of Chriſt, but deceivers, the Scripture, their own profeſſed Rule, doth prove them ſo; for it muſt needs be that they muſt be the ſame men that they were, whoſe ſpirit they walk by, and whoſe fruits they bring forth, and this cannot be avoided, they are the ſame trees that bring forth the ſame fruits; and let no man blame me for ſaying ſuch are deceivers, that preacheth for hire, and divines for mony, and goes for gifts and reward; and that are called of men Maſter, and have the chief place in the aſſemblies, and are covetous, and high-minded, and ſeeks for their gain from their quarter, with thoſe things which I have mentioned, which are the ſame things which the falſe Prophers acted in ages paſt; I ſay I am nor now to be blamed for ſaying theſe are deceivers, who are acting ſuch things now in this age, as they acted then that were deceivers; but if you blame any, begin with *Iſaiah*, and *Micah*, and *Ezekiel*, and Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and the reſt of the holy men of God, for they are my examples in this, who did declare againſt them that brought forth ſuch works, as theſe do that I have declared againſt: and I have done the teachers of this age no wrong for judging them by their own line, and laying them to their own profeſſed rule; therefore do not rage at me, nor do not be offended at this; for I have but compared them with the Miniſters of Chriſt, and with the Miniſters of Antichriſt, and ſhewed wherein they do agree to the one, and diſagree to

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the other; and all people may see, and the light in all conciences may judge of what I have said, so that as I said at the first, I may again say; what think you? was there ever such a generation of teachers? I now answer, yea; there was in the days of the true Prophets; and in the days of the Apostles there were such as these are, which were deceivers; and in the times of Christ, there were such a generation as these are, who acted the same things by the same spirit, as these do at this day; let them reply to this that will; my question is sober, and my answer is just and right; and I have dealt faithfully; and you may read the Scriptures that I have quoted for your own satisfaction; for though they falsly say, the Scripture is their rule, and accuseth us falsly that we deny the Scripture, yet the Scripture shall be judge between us in this matter; and what I have done is not in envie to any mans person, neither in upbraiding them in their wickedness, but I do it rather to shew them all their iniquities that they may repent, and this I have done in perfect love to all people, for the day is come that hath brought hidden things to light, and deceit and hypocrisie which hath layen hid, is now fully made manifest as at Noon day.

But again secondly I answer, in some respects I do believe there were never such a generation of teachers as these are, for we do not read in all the Scriptures concerning the false Prophets, that they were so extreamly covetous and greedy of gain as these are; or that ever they took such desperate, wicked, unlawfull courses to get their maintenance, and compel people to pay them, as these teachers do, a very shame to rehearse it, and to their shame I do rehearse it, many a poor man in this Nation hath been sued by them at the Law, and put in prison by their meanes, and had their goods spoyled in a woful manner, for to maintain them, and to uphold them; yea some hundreds of poor people in this Nation, hath been dealt cruelly by, and unjustly with, because for conscience sake they have denyed to maintain them, to pay them tythes, or such like; this may be proved, that for five shillings unjustly claimed by them, they have taken goods by Distraint to the vallue of five times so much, as *Cumberland* and *Westmorland* can witnesse, and many at this very day lies in holes and prisons by the means of the Priests, who teareth the people as Wolves doth the sheep; it is even wofull to be considered, what havock is made of some mens persons, and some mens goods, and all to maintain the Teachers; the like never was in any generation, as is brought forth in this generation in this particular; and again their exceeding covetousnesse and greedinesse of lucre doth appear in that they claim wages of people, and do compel people to pay them wages after this manner as I have said, for which people they do no work, neither do these people receive any work done by them with whom they thus deal; what thing can be more unjust under Heaven, that they should compel people by a Law to pay them, and thus punishes them if they will not, who set them not on work, and for whom they do no work; neither doth the people like their work or love it, but knowes it to be deceitfull, & yet are

compelled by a Law to pay them; they have such a way to get monie, that no tradsman besides themselves, like it, for they cause people, and compel people to buy their wares, and they compel people to pay for their commoditie, which hath none of it, nor loves it; and this is more unjust then may be spoken, are they like Ministers of Christ? Or do they follow their example in these practices? What do you judge? All people bring in your verdict: or are they not like deceivers herein even exceeding all that ever went before; it is true they which preach the Gospel, should live on the Gospel; this argument we do own: but let these men be tried, and see if by their preaching their Gospel they have gained so much love in people as to maintain them without the Law, and without compelling of maintenance and livelie-hood from them by a Law; let but the Law cease to compel Tithes, and other things, from people to maintain them, and see whether their Gospel will maintain them or not; let but the Magistrates hold their hands from causing people to pay them tithes by their orders and writs, and I'le undertake, as I do believe they must either beg, or work, or a worse thing for a lively-hood, or else perish, so little love is there in their own people towards them, so little love have they gained in the hearts of many people toward them, these many years that they have preached; and herein again I do believe that they do exceed all the false Prophets: and all the deceivers that ever went before them in this respect, none ever had the Magistrates to act for them as these have, and as it appears, the Rulers some of them are at the wils of the teachers, to do for them what they desire, either to take peoples goods, or to send them to prison; shewing that these Teachers have not a spiritual weapon to defend themselves but that the Magistrates with their Law are their chiefest Armour, for if they can but get favour of a Magistrate, they have allowance to preach at such a place, and if they can get the favour of the Magistrate they can do wel enough to be maintained, by causing such to be sent to prison, or taxing treble damages upon their goods if they will not help to maintain them: and if they have the favour of the Magistrate, if any do reprove them for these things, and for other of their wickednesse, and if any do but tell them of it, they can have such sent to prison, as in revenge, for speaking and reproveing them for their wickednesse, hath some hundreds of innocent people suffered cruell imprisonments, and other cruel things in these Nations, so that iniquitie is upheld as it were by force and power: so that it is not their Gospel that maintaines them and gets them favour with the people, nor doth it defend them, but it is the command and warrant of the Magistrate which doth all this: so when the Magistrates ceaseth to approve them, to maintain them, and defend them, they must utterly fall into misery, and can neither be aproved, maintained or defended any other way: for because of this their wickednes, God hath left them, & all honest true hearted people hath left them: therefore what a condition are the teachers in, who deserves not the love of men because they are so cruel hearted towards them, & they

they deſerve not the love of God, becauſe they are ſo wicked againſt him; and I might yet more fully deſcribe and declare, wherein they do exceed the deceivers and falſe Prophets of old; but of this according as the Lord moves and leadeth: and this may ſuffice to ſhew what they are by their works, and by the ſpirit that leads them; which appears not to be the ſpirit of God, but the ſpirit of Antichriſt.

Furthermore and beſides all this that I have ſaid, herein they do exceed the deceivers that are gon before; for upon account the ſum of their maintenance yearly in theſe Nations being reckoned may be about †fifteen hundred thouſand pounds a yeare: Oh wonderful! is not this almoſt incredible, that the teachers ſhould put the nation to ſuch a charge as this, and yet people receives nothing anſwerable to it? but all this money is ſpent for that which is not bread, and their labour waſted, and they have no profit thereby: this money might be made better uſe of, then to give it for deceiving the people: and if any doubt of this account, and ſhall think this is not like to be true, upon an even reckoning it may be proved and made appear conſidering how many pariſhes there is, and reckon what belongs to every Prieſts, pariſh with what is given to the Prieſts in *Ireland*, which is abundance: theſe things are a ſhame to the Miniſtrie of Chriſt, though the impudent teachers of theſe Nations are void of ſhame herein.

† *One million & five hundred thouſand pounds per annum.*

A Reply to the Prieſts Plea, and an Anſwer to their Objections.

WHereas many of the Prieſts of *England*, to hide themſelves from the charge of being hirelings, they alleadg theſe ſcriptures, *The laboror is worthy of his hire, and the workman is worthy of his meat*: but theſe Scriptures will not ſerve to cover their ſhame in what is charged againſt them: for this hire which Chriſt allowes to the labourers, *is but to remain in the ſame houſe in which they enter, eating and drinking ſuch things as they give them; with ſuch who were worthy* they were to remain, *and to eate that which was ſet before them*: and they laboured truly, and traveled up and down, and were truly worthy of meat for their work, and of this *hire* for their labor; but this makes nothing for the lawfulneſs of ſo many pounds a year at a certain place: this is more then eating at a houſe which is worthy, to bargain with people for ſo much a year, and compelling people to pay by a Law, that do denie; Chriſt never inſtitu'ted ſuch a practice, neither can it be truly ſaid that theſe called Miniſters do labour as the Miniſters of Chriſt did; and ſo this ſcripture is but wreſted by them, when they bring it for proof of their practice for their hundred pounds a year, compelling ſome of it from the people, doth exceed eating and drinking

Luke 10. 7, 8.

to ſuffice nature, with ſuch who are worthy; ſo this Scripture makes not for their turne, nor doth it juſtifie their practices.

Again, they object againſt and charge the words of *Paul*, who ſaid, *He that preacheth the Goſpel ſhall live on the Goſpel, and that it was a ſmall matter to reap carnal things from them unto whom they ſowed ſpirituall things*; but this Scripture makes not for them; for as I have ſaid, it's not the preaching of the Goſpel that maintaines them; but the Magiſtrates with their Law that compels maintenance from the people, and this is not to live on the Goſpel: for we allow as *Paul* did, that they which preach the Goſpel ſhould live on the Goſpel; therefore let the Magiſtrates ceaſe with their power to cauſe people to pay them, and let all the world ſee if their Goſpel will maintaine them; and let them reap their carnal things from them where they ſow ſpiritual; but they muſt reap as a free gift too, and not by compulſion, for ſo the Apoſtle ſignifies; it is a ſmall matter for *any to reap carnal things where they ſow ſpirituall things*; yet what is this to prove the lawfulneſſe of bargaining with people for ſo much by the year, as theſe teachers of *England* do many of them, and wil not preach except they have ſo much promiſed them before; for it is right to reap after ſowing, but it is a trangreſſion to bargain to reap before they ſow: and theſe ſcriptures will not hide them nor defend them in their practice; for if the Magiſtrates did not compel from people maintenance by a Law, the Prieſts of this age would reap but little from any thing that they ſow; for there's little love in the hearts of people towards them. Alſo they object, *He that plants a Vineyard, may eat of the fruit thereof; and he that keeps a flock, may eat of the milk of the flock*: this *Paul* ſaid though he would not make uſe of his power herein, but wrought with his hands, that the Goſpel might not be chargeable; but what vineyards have the teachers of *England* planted? or what flocks do they keep? their vineyards proves not tender grapes, but wild ſowr grapes; wild vines, and not vines to bring forth acceptable fruits; and their flocks proves not flocks of ſheep; but wild rude people who are in the nature of wolves, and Lyons; and if the Magiſtrates Law were not, their vineyard nor the flock would hardly yeeld them any maintenance; the Apoſtles planted firſt a vineyard, and gathered the ſheep, before they reaped or eat any of the fruits, but the teachers of *England* differ from them in this, for they know what they muſt have before they plant, or before they feed their flock, and differs from the Apoſtles practice who firſt planted a vineyard, and gathered a flock before they could receive any crop; and they would *not then uſe their power*, but kept the Goſpel of Chriſt without charge; ſo that this ſcripture will not prove the Prieſts actions lawful, in preaching for ſums of monie: and ſome other Scriptures they bring to prove the lawfulneſſe of their preaching for hire, which may all be anſwered as theſe are, and whatſoever they can object will not juſtifie them for their reaping carnal things, and their hire, and their eating of the milk of the flock, is quite of another nature, as is proved, then the Apoſtles practices were; and were the people wiſe they would ſee and underſtand theſe things, and not be deluded through per-

verting of Scriptures, and through wresting of them, to other ends then wherefore they were given forth; and this is written to answer some of their objections, whereby they would defend themselves; for what though *Paul took of other Churches to supplie his necessities, as sometimes he did,* yet this wil not prove the lawfulnes of their hundreds of pounds by the year, most of which they spend in pride and idleneſſe; so that still this Judgement is true upon them which I have given, all objections being answered, and all defences being made void; and hereof they are guilty as I have charged them, and proved it out of the Scripture: *They disagree to the Ministers of Christ, and agrees with the deceivers, and in some particulars exceeds them;* for I believe all the false prophets in *Israel* did not destroy any whit near a Million and a halfe of money in a year, considering all things it must come to little leſſe, their funeral sermons, their great Tythes, and small tithes, and marriages, and sprinkling of Infants, and Churching of women, with other such penuries claimed by the Priests of *England,* with what is given to them out of the Nations treasure, which is many hundred pounds a yeare; also considering how much in a year is spent and consumed at two or three Colledges in this Nation, in relation to the Ministrie; as in bringing some up to the attainment of the Ministrie (as they call it) and upon the educators of such, with a very great abundance of such like charges, consumed out of the Nations treasure, which is wasted, as in relation to this Ministrie spoken of: I do not speak against good education and learning, which is in its place a vertue, (as for travelers and many others) neither do I account such monie vainly wasted and spent; But onely as to the Ministry of Christ, natural learning is not there admitted to make Ministers, or to enable them therunto; but that monie which is thereupon spent, is wasted and consumed; and how much is spent in this way, and for such an end onelie, I leave wise men to judge, which will make up a large sum in the whole; considering all things I say, their yearly maintenance may amount to fifteen hundred thousand pounds a year, which is a thousand thousands, and halfe a thousand thousand pounds: Men of weak understandings can hardly reach, to know how much it is, and that makes me thus plainely expound it.

A description of the true ministers of Christ, and its maintenance.

THe day hath appeared that makes all things manifeſt, and the light is arisen, that gives to discern between truth and error; between the true and every false way, and between the worship of God, which is spiritual and every false worship of the world, which is Idolatrie; and the true Ministrie of Christ is known from the false Ministrie, by their several *fruits and signes,* for hidden things are brought to light, and secret things are revealed: but now the people of the world, both the wise and the foolish

thus,

thus they object, and ſay, *Seeing that you do ſo much condemn our Miniſtrie and Miniſters in their call, in their practices, in their converſation, and in their maintenance; what miniſtrie do you own? and what Miniſters do you allow of? and whether would you have any Miniſtrie at all, ſeeing you throw down and declares againſt ſuch as the Law of the Land ſets up, and ſuch as we have looked upon to be able Miniſters? and after this manner are the people of this generation begun to reaſon among themſelves, ſaying, what would the people do if they had power? what Miniſters would they approve of? and what maintenace would they allow them?*

To all this I do anſwer and ſay, The true Miniſters and Miniſtry of Chriſt we do allow of, and we would have ſet up and eſtabliſhed, and we wait patiently till it be brought to paſſe, even ſuch as are ordained *by power from on high*, and who have received the gift of *the Holy Ghoſt*; who are called of God into the work of the Miniſtrie, ſuch we do approve of to be Miniſters of Chriſt, *in whom he is revealed*, and who have received him, and are changed by him from death to life, and out of darkneſſe into the kingdom of the Son of God, *and who are borne of the ſpirit, and are led and guided by it into all truth*, and are called by it to follow *the Lamb whetherſoever he goeth*, & who are taught by it in all their practices of Religion, and in the whole worſhip of God, ſuch we own as have felt the operation of the ſpirit in themſelves, and who have *taſted, handled, ſeen, and felt of the word of life, which abides forever*, and ſuch who goeth in the name of the Lord, to Miniſter and declare freely what they have freely received of God by his Spirit, and who preacheth Chriſt freelie, as the onely way and meanes of life and ſalvation unto all people, even ſuch as miniſtreth him the way, *the truth, and the life*, the onely juſtifier and ſanctifier, and deliverer of them that believe, and the condemner of them that believe not, and ſuch as Miniſtereth Chriſt, onely the teacher and leader of his people, and nothing elſe beſides him; and ſuch we allow, as onely ſeeketh and laboureth in the wiſdome of God to bring people out of the waies of ſin and death, unto the knowledge of God, and to the things that belong unto their peace, ſuch who have no reſpect to large places, or great benefits, to ſeek after that, who will not have hire for preaching, nor be hired by great ſumes of monie from one Country to another, ſuch as makes the Goſpel of Chriſt *free, and without charge, who will not be burthenſome to any*, but walks in all wiſdom, as examples of righteouſneſſe to all people; whoſe *converſations are in heaven*, and holdeth forth in life and practice, unto all men, what they profeſſe in words, and by doctrine and converſation holding forth the *light of the glorious Goſpel*, which they have received from God, being patterns of all holineſſe, of peace and long ſuffering, of meekneſſe and patience unto their flocks; even ſuch who walks in Chriſt, and ſhewes forth good works, and the fruits of his ſpirit, cauſing his light *to ſhine forth among men*, in humilitie, and ſoberneſſe, and in all the fruits of peace, and truth, and ſuch are approved of God, and of the ſaints, even they that preach Chriſt freely to all people, and holds forth the light of the world, *which lighteth every one in the world*, the free gift of God to all mankind, that all *may believe and come to the knowledge of the truth, and be ſaved*; and ſuch Miniſters

niſters reſpects not the perſons of any man *for advantage*, neither reſpects *dayes, nor places, nor things*, but worſhips God *in ſpirit and in truth*, and teacheth that worſhip unto all people, and they gather people into the new covenant, where Chriſt is the high Prieſt, *and our bodies the Temples of God*, and the circumciſion *in the heart, and in the ſpirit*, for ſuch are Miniſters of the ſpirit and not of the Letter, *and they divide the word of God aright*; they feed the hungrie,& the rich are ſent emptie away;they crie not peace to the wicked,neither doth juſtifie the unconverted; neither doe they condemn the righteous, nor ſuch as are of an upright heart; but Chriſt they preach, to juſtifie all *that do believe, and are obedient to him*, and to condemn all that *believe not, but are diſobedient*; and ſuch miniſters hath the word of reconciliation,and their Miniſtrie is made effectual,to accompliſh the work of God; ſinners are converted and brought to God thereby, and to be taught of him alone, and the Saints through that Miniſtrie, may obtain *to the Holy Ghoſt, and to need no man to teach them, but as the annointing within teacheth them*, which they receive through the Miniſtrie, whoſe labour is, and the end of it, *to preſent every man perfect in Chriſt*; and this Miniſtrie, and ſuch Miniſters we approve of, and they are approved of Chriſt, and we would have them eſtabliſhed, and who are ſuch will not take care for an outward maintenance, neither what to eat, or what to put on; neither will they petition to Magiſtrates for tithes & augmentations, but are without care; as for a livelihood in this world, they will not remove from one Towne to another, for a better Parſonage or place; for ſuch as do ſo, are not the lawful called Miniſters of Chriſt,but have run,and were never ſent; for Chriſts Miniſters takes no thought for any outward maintenance, but approveth themſelves in patience in all conditions, and ſometimes are *in want, and cold, and hunger, and nakedneſſe, and in perſecutions, and tryals, and afflictions*, and ſuffereth all things for the Name of Chriſt, and yet we do believe and know, *that ſuch have power to eat and to drink, and may receive carnal things where they ſow ſpiritual things*, but as a free gift,and not by compulſion or force; we do allow that the Miniſters of Chriſt *may eat of the milk of the flock, which they keep and feed, and they may eat of the fruit of the vineyard which they have planted*, and which they labour in, and they may ſupply their neceſſities from them whom they have begotten in the faith, and whom they labour among in life and doctrine, who are ſheep of the fold, and plants of the vineyard of Chriſt Jeſus; but I ſay as a free gift may they receive the fruits of their labours, and not as a debt, or any title claimed thereto by the Law of the Nation; neither may they receive it by force or compulſion; but who are the truely called Miniſters of Chriſt are ſo far from this, or forcing maintenance from any, that they will not make *uſe of their power*, in taking what may be freely given them, for they will not make the Goſpel burthenſome by any meanes, and this is the maintenance we do allow the Miniſters of Chriſt; they *may eat ſuch things as are ſet before them in any houſe which they enter into, which is worthy*; and they may ſupplie their neceſſities in food and raiment, as a free gift from them wh-

whom the Miniſters are made ſtewards, *to watch over them and to exhort them, to inſtruct them, and to edifie them*; but not from the world who continues in unbeliefe and diſobedience to the Goſpel, may they receive any outward maintenance by compulſion, or by a free gift, neither may they receive great ſums of monie by the year, or tithes, or other offerings to maintain themſelves and their families in pride and idleneſſe, and luſt and exceſſe, and ſuperfluity in meats and apparrel; ſuch a maintenance is by free gift, much leſſe by force that is not allowed by Chriſt and his Saints, but is the maintenance of Antichriſtian teachers, which never were ſent of Chriſt, & ſuch cannot be content with his allowance and wages, but lives in pride and pleaſures of this world, and in vanity, and maintained they ſay they muſt be, and if they be ſo, they care not from whence it come, nor by what meanes; and that is the reaſon wherefore ſo many hundreds of honeſt people are ſo ſpoiled in their perſons and eſtates, the bodies of ſome being caſt into priſon, and many others having their goods taken from them by force and diſtraint; and all this is to maintain Antichriſts Miniſters, who neither cares how they have it, nor from whom, or to what evil uſe they improve it; and this plainlie appeares in this Nation, by many evidences, but the Miniſters of Chriſt, doth denie ſuch a maintenance, and ſuch practices, and are come to that life which judgeth all theſe things.

And as concerning *compelling* of maintenance, and forcing of it from people, this is utterly againſt the Law of Chriſt, and condemned by him, and denied by the Saints; for it is unreaſonable and no equality in it, that people ſhould be compelled to maintain a Miniſtrie, eſpecialie ſuch a one as they know is not the Miniſtrie of Chriſt, neither is profitable to them, and which they receive no fruits from, for the Miniſters of Chriſt doth not deſire maintenance from the people of the world, neither can receive any from them, neither in juſtice and equity ſhould the Miniſters of the world receive or *compel maintenance* from the Saints by force and cruelty: but this we would, and this is reaſon and equitie, let all miniſters be maintainned by ſuch as approves them, and hears them, and partakes of their labours, and ſo the Saints will maintain their Miniſters, and the world may maintain theirs, and everie ſort of people may maintain ſuch Miniſters as labours for them, and none to be forced to maintain ſuch as they do not approve of, nor none hindred from maintaining of ſuch, as they doe approve of, be they true, or falſe Miniſters; and this is reaſon and a good conſcience, that everie man be left free in ſuch caſes, *to maintaine whom he will, and to give as he will, and what he will*; and this is reaſon and equitie, that no man be compelled to give, or *hindred* from giving to whom he pleaſeth, and what he pleaſeth, and ſo let people make choice of their Miniſters, whom they will approve and whom they will hear, and of whoſe labours they will receive, and then let them maintain them, and if any be compelled, let them be compelled to pay their own ſervants who miniſters to them and not anothers, for whom they do no worke; and this is juſt and right both for Miniſters, and people,

that

that every Minister be paid by them, to whom he doth minister, and who receives him as a Minister, and for whom he doth work; and this great injustice and oppression in *England* will cease: if this Law of equity and righteousnesse were established, and all people left free to hear, and approve of whom they will, and then to pay them, & maintain them; and this would trie the Ministers, and who converted the most to God, and gained the love of most people, and if they wrought well they may receive *a maintenance accordingly, by the free gift of the people*; and the Ministers that are not content with this Law, are out of pure reason and equitie, and sheweth that they dare not trust the Lord, *nor the fruits of their labours*, but would be maintained in idlenesse, by unlawful means, by compelling maintenance from them to whom they do no work; and such shews great covetousnesse, who desires more then the *milk of their own flock, and the fruits of their own vineyard*; but in equitie and justice let every Minister be maintained by the fruits of his own labour, from the people for whom he doth labour, and this will content most part of the people; and till this be established in the earth, truth justice and judgement will be wanting in this particular; and this is according to truth, and to a righteous Law; and by this all people may understand what Ministers and Ministrie we do allow and approve of, and how Ministers ought to be maintained; and if any goe forth to a place and country, and among the people that are not converted, then the Church ought to take care to maintain such in their work, till they may reap of their own labour, and eate of the fruit of their own Vineyard, but all this ought to be *without compelling or forceing by the Minister*; for every Minister of Christ doth chiefly take care of the work unto which he is called; and is without care for outward maintenance.

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